

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) (together Services) are in the process of issuing a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in anticipation of an application by the State of Washington involving the Washington State Forest Practices Rules pertaining to aquatic species, and their regulation of forest management activities on non-federal forestlands. The State is expected to seek take coverage under either Section 4(d) or Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), or both for aquatic species.

During a 30-day public scoping period the Services are seeking information and suggestions on issues to include in the Environmental Impact Statement. Comments and requests for background information should be sent to:

Craig Hansen, FWS
510 Desmond Drive, S.E., Suite 102
Lacey, Washington 98503-1273
Telephone (360) 753-6046
Facsimile (360) 753-9518

Steve Keller, NMFS
510 Desmond Drive, S.E.
Lacey, Washington 98503-1273
Telephone (360) 534-9309
Facsimile (360) 753-9517

Four public meetings are scheduled across the State in March 2003 to provide the public with an opportunity to review and comment on the scope of the EIS. Each meeting will be held from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. and will begin with a one-hour open house to accommodate informal discussion and questions. The presentation portion of the meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m.

March 18	Tacoma Sheraton Hotel	1320 Broadway Plaza, Tacoma, WA
March 20	Red Lion Hotel	221 N Lincoln, Port Angeles, WA
March 25	Red Lion Hotel at the Park (previously known as the WestCoast Grand)	303 W North River Dr, Spokane, WA
March 26	Central Washington U. Grupe Center	400 E 8 th Ave, Ellensburg, WA

Comments pertaining to the scope of this EIS should be submitted to the Services at the addresses or facsimile numbers listed above. The deadline will be announced in the Federal Register and another notice will be sent to you. The Services cannot accept comments sent by e-mail. All comments received during this public comment period will be included in a summary of comments that will be available upon request from the FWS and the NMFS contacts listed above. Additional information and announcements regarding this project are available at the website for the DNR Federal Assurances Project at: <http://www.wa.gov/dnr/htdocs/agency/federalassurances/>.